In the Claims

Claims 3, 16, 18 – 20, 25 and 26 are cancelled.

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a chain-shortened polynucleotide or salt thereof in which the proportion of a 2'-5' phosphodiester bond is up to 3% based on the whole phosphodiester bonds, characterized in that a polynucleotide or salt thereof is reacted in a solution at pH 7 to 10 at temperature between 20 and 110°C to shorten the chain with measuring a phosphate rearrangement rate.

5. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a chain-shortened polynucleotide or salt thereof in which the proportion of a 2'-5' phosphodiester bond is up to 3% based on the whole phosphodiester bonds, characterized in that a polynucleotide or salt thereof is treated with a phosphodiesterase for chain-shortening with measuring a phosphate rearrangement rate.

6. (Amended) A polynucleotide or salt thereof in which the average chain length is between 0.1 k bases and 1 k bases, characterized in that the proportion of a 2'-5' phosphodiester bond is in the range of about 0.1% to 3% based on the total number of phosphodiester bonds, wherein the polynucleotide is polyinosinic acid or an analogue thereof, polycytidylic acid or an analogue thereof, polyadenylic acid or an analogue thereof, or polyuridylic acid or an analogue thereof.

7. (Cancelled).

8. (Amended) ~~A polynucleotide or salt thereof according to any one of Claims 1, 2, or which is in form of a~~ double stranded polynucleotide or ~~sale~~ salt thereof formed from two of the polynucleotides according to claim 6 ~~formed from two polynucleotides or salts thereof which are capable of forming a double strand~~, wherein the two polynucleotides are selected from the group consisting of a combination of polyinosinic acid and polycytidylic acid, of polyadenylic acid and polyuridylic acid, of polyinosinic acid analogue and polycytidylic acid, of polyinosinic acid and polycytidylic acid analogue, of polyinosinic acid analogue and polycytidylic acid analogue, of polyadenylic acid analogue and polyuridylic acid, or polyadenylic acid and polyuridylic acid analogue, and of polyadenylic acid analogue and polyuridylic acid analogue.

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Amended) A composition comprising a complex formed from a carrier effective for introducing a medicament into a cell and ~~a polynucleotide~~ two of polynucleotides or ~~salt~~ salts thereof according to ~~any one of Claims 1, 2 or~~ claim 6~~,~~ or a double stranded polynucleotide or salt thereof according to Claim 8 ~~or 9~~ as ~~an~~ essential ~~ingredient.~~ ingredients, wherein the two polynucleotides are selected from the group consisting of a combination of polyinosinic acid and polycytidylic acid, of polyadenylic acid and polyuridylic acid, of polyinosinic acid analogue and polycytidylic acid, of polyinosinic acid and polycytidylic acid analogue, of polyinosinic acid analogue and polycytidylic acid analogue, of polyadenylic acid analogue and polyuridylic acid, of polyadenylic acid and polyuridylic acid analogue, and of polyadenylic acid analogue and polyuridylic acid analogue.

11. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 10 wherein the carrier effective for introducing a medicament into a cell is a positively charged carrier.

12. (Amended) The composition according to Claim 11, wherein the positively charged carrier is a ~~cationoc~~ cationic liposome.

13. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 10, wherein the carrier effective for introducing a medicament into a cell is a carrier formed from 2-O-(2-diethylaminoethyl)carbamoyl-1,3-O-dioleoylglycerol and a phospholipid as essential constituent components.

14. (Previously Presented) The composition according to any one of claims 10 to 13, which is in the form of a pharmaceutical preparation.

15. (Previously Presented) The composition according to Claim 14, wherein the pharmaceutical preparation is an interferon inducing agent, immune activating agent, intracellular nuclease activating agent, cancer treating agent or preventive agent, or hepatitis treating agent [or preventive agent].

16. (Cancelled).

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Withdrawn) The method according to 4, wherein the polynucleotide is polyinosinic acid or analogue thereof, polycytidylic acid or analogue thereof, polyadenylic acid or analogue thereof, or polyuridylic acid or analogue thereof.

22. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 5, wherein the polynucleotide is polyinosinic acid or analogue thereof, polycytidylic acid or analogue thereof, polyadenylic acid or analogue thereof, or polyuridylic acid or analogue thereof.

23. (Cancelled).

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Cancelled).

26. (Cancelled).

27. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a polynucleotide or salt thereof in which the proportion of a 2'-5' phosphodiester bond is up to about 3% based on the totalphosphodiester bonds and the average chain length is between 0.1 k bases and 1 k bases comprising measuring the phosphate rearrangement rate in the course of preparing the polynucleotide or salt thereof.

28. (Withdrawn) The method for preparing the chain-shortened polynucleotide or salt thereof according to claim 6, wherein the polynucleotide or salt thereof has an average chain length of between about 0.1 k bases and about 1 k bases.

29. (Withdrawn) The method for preparing the chain-shortened polynucleotide or salt thereof according to claim 7, wherein the polynucleotide or salt thereof has an average chain length of between about 0.1 k bases and about 1 k bases.

30. (Cancelled).

31. (Cancelled).

32. (Cancelled).